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For

New Mill Urban District.

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

— **1913.** —



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REPORT

For 1913.

GENTLEMEN,

The New Mill Urban District consists of 6,200 acres of land, mostly draining towards the New Mill dyke. Much of it is at an elevation of over 1,000 feet. It has a bleak and rainy climate, and a subsoil of clay, shale, and sand overlying sandstone and coal measures.

The population at the last census was 4,568. It is estimated to have been 4,560 at the middle of 1913—a slight decrease. The people live mostly in four villages—New Mill, Scholes, Hepworth, and Jackson Bridge; but houses are scattered throughout the district.

They are chiefly employed in the manufacture of woollen cloths, coal-mining, brick and tile making, and farming. Stone quarrying used to be a large industry, but little seems to be got now.

The land is mostly in grass, and there are many small occupiers farming a few acres, but depending on some other trade for their main livelihood. Many of these farm-houses and other houses were formerly occupied and often owned by cloth manufacturers, who wove the cloth in hand-loomes in the chambers of their houses, and they were sometimes very large; indeed at a time when there was more zeal and fewer chapels some of these upper rooms were used as preaching places. Now, when all the processes of cloth-making are carried on in the factories, these workrooms make large bedrooms, and a house of only two rooms often has plenty of air space.

Trade has been good, and pauperism is decreasing. There is no Workhouse, Hospital, or Asylum in the district, which is included in the Huddersfield Union. Serious accidents and special diseases are sent to the Infirmary at Huddersfield.

This district is peculiar in having no railways or tramways, though there are four railway stations within short distances. As there are more work-people living within the district than the factories, etc., can employ, many of them have to walk long distances to their work.

WATER SUPPLY.

Last year the rainfall was much below the average, being about 38 inches, instead of the 58 of 1912. The springs soon decreased or failed, and the small reserve was soon exhausted, but the mains were joined to those of the Huddersfield Corporation, and there was no curtailment of supply within the area supplied by the Council. At Victoria, where there is no proper supply, water-carts were used to accommodate the people.

A large increase has lately been obtained from fresh drifts, but it will not be sufficient unless larger reservoirs are made to store it. The matter is in the hands of the Engineers, but a perfectly satisfactory site for the reservoir has not yet been decided on.

The demand for water is likely to increase with the building of new houses and the extended use of water-closets.

48 yds. of water mains have been laid and 11 additional houses have been connected during the year.

SEWERAGE.

251 yards of 6in., 9in., and 12in. sewers have been laid at Mearhouse Bank, Spring Wood, and New Mill. All the populous parts of the district are connected with the main sewers and sewage disposal works, except a few places of special difficulty. Several small hamlets also have small drainage systems. But many isolated farms and cottages still have inadequate and defective drains.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

There are 637 privies with covered middens, 64 water closets, and 15 tub closets in the district. 6 privies have been re-constructed, 9 additional privies have been built, and 8 water closets and 2 privies have been constructed for new houses during the year.

SCAVENGING.

Scavenging and the removal of night soil is done by contractors, and on the extreme outskirts by farmers. I have received no complaints, but constant watchfulness is needed in this department. The Council should always have a clear understanding with the Contractors as to where they intend to use the material, which may be dangerous as well as disagreeable if carted on to land near houses. If housewives would take the trouble to burn all waste animal and vegetable matter it would help the scavenging, retard the too rapid growth of the refuse tips, and perhaps save a little coal.

NUISANCE INSPECTION.

The Nuisance Inspector informs me that he has made 213 inspections. At the close of 1912, 39 nuisances were in hand, 25 more were reported or discovered, 51 were abated, leaving 13 in hand at the end of 1913.

Ten notices were served, of which five have been complied with. There are no common lodging-houses, knacker's yards, offensive trades, or underground sleeping rooms.

SCHOOLS.

There are 5 elementary schools in the district. They are supplied with water and well kept, and are under the care of the School Medical Officers of the County Council. The schools at Scholes were closed for three weeks on account of Scarlet Fever.

MILK SUPPLY.

The situation in regard to the milk supply is interesting. Hitherto we have insisted on the registration of cowsheds, etc., only when the occupiers made a trade of selling milk, and practically only those dairymen got registered whom the Inspector knew to be selling or delivering milk in the streets.

At present 29 cowkeepers, occupying 35 cowsheds, are registered, but there are 210 cowkeepers in the district. They mostly keep one or two milkcows for their own use and to rear calves. This explains why there are so few recognised dairymen. There are no purveyors of milk who do not keep cows. The general condition of the cowsheds is slowly improving, but there is still some disinclination to allow sufficient ventilation, airspace, and room for cleanliness.

The registered cowkeepers vary a little every year. 36 inspections were made, and my attention was drawn to six farms where the cowsheds are defective. Four of these need to be replaced by new ones, and in two cases steps are being taken to build them. There have been no complaints as to the quality of milk sold. The returns of death and disease do not indicate any disease caused by milk, though of course there may have been such cases.

Four young cows have been found to be tuberculous, and they have been destroyed by the County authorities. The premises from which they were removed have been inspected.

The taking of samples, under the Food and Drugs Acts, is left to the County officials. No unsound food has been discovered.

There are two slaughterhouses. They are suitable buildings, and well kept. They have been frequently inspected. I do not think any inferior or diseased meat is retailed in the district.

There is only one bakehouse. It is not underground.

There are four fried fish shops which are well kept. The workshops number 34 this year. They have all been inspected and found well kept, and not overcrowded. No home work is given out.

HOUSING.

Seeing that the population is still decreasing, there is no fear of such overcrowding as arises sometimes in more thriving places, but there is a constant tendency for the people to concentrate in the larger villages, where they are nearer to their work and to the railway, and the deserted empty houses on the outskirts rapidly become dilapidated. Of the 22 cases of overcrowding previously reported, 5 still remain unremedied; but in two of these the tenants have definitely taken larger houses; another occupier is hoping to make an alteration soon, leaving two cases where the tenants are still professing to look for better houses. These cases were considered overcrowded from the point of view of airspace in bedrooms. Another standard—viz., two persons per room in house having been adopted, the Inspector has made a fresh survey of houses where he knew the families were large, and he has reported two other cases.

There are many old inconvenient houses which cannot be said to be unfit to live in, and out of which the tenants would like to move if they could find houses more suited to the needs of their families. There will soon be a little more choice, for 8 very good houses have been built at Mearhouse Bank, and 1 at Victoria, while in three other places division or enlargements of old houses have resulted in the provision of 3 more, making a total addition of 12 houses. If 12 more were built the present congestion would be relieved.

The Council are considering a scheme for providing more houses and, seeing that there are 161 houses with only one bedroom, I have recommended that they should build model cottages with living-room, scullery, 3 bedrooms, bath, and w.c., semi-detached and self-contained, and with gardens, if possible.

The Inspector has furnished the following Statement of Work done under the housing regulations:

- 150 houses inspected.
- 25 houses with minor defects (in houses occupied before 1909).
- 10 cases where such defects have been remedied, leaving
- 15 still under observation.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The sanitary staff consists of the Nuisance Inspector, who is also the Inspector under the Housing regulations, and the Sewage Disposal Works Manager. Other work is done by contractors.

This district is included in the area of the Colne and Holme Joint Isolation Hospital Board, who have Hospitals for Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Enteric Fever, and Small Pox, at Meltham. There has always been room for patients when required this year. Out of 61 cases notified, 47 were sent to the Isolation Hospital.

Infected premises are stoved with the formalin lamp.

Infected bedding may be sent to the hospital to be disinfected.

The Council pays for anti-diphtheritic serum and

Pathological specimens are sent to the County Laboratories for aid in diagnosis.

Part iii. of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, and the Private Street Works Act, 1892, have been adopted.

It would give the Council more control over buildings and infectious disease if parts of the Amendment Act of 1907 were adopted.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The epidemic of Scarlet Fever which prevailed during 1912 continued throughout 1913. In 1912 Hade Edge was the chief centre; but in 1913 Scholes suffered most. Out of 47 cases, 7 occurred in Fulstone, 10 in Hepworth, and 30 in Scholes. Forty-one cases out of the 47 were sent to the Isolation Hospital, and 6 were treated at home. There is no evidence that milk or any other cause, except personal infection, and school attendance, was to blame, for the epidemic declined temporally when the Scholes school was closed. Possibly the epidemic was kept up by the cases treated at home not being efficiently isolated, also by one or two supposed return cases; but it is most probable that mild unrecognised or unnotified cases were the chief means of keeping it up. Fresh importations also occurred. A man who had one child in an isolation hospital brought another child, who was obviously suffering from Scarlet Fever, into this district.

Diphtheria.—Ten cases of diphtheria were notified. They occurred at all seasons and in various districts without obvious cause or connection. Five of them were sent to hospital.

Enteric Fever.—There were three cases of Enteric or Typhoid Fever: These, also, were widely separated as to time and place and of unknown origin.

TUBERCULOSIS.

As the notification of all forms of tuberculosis has not been in force for a whole year, I am not required to enlarge upon it.

It seems due to the Council to state that there have been 10 notifications of pulmonary tuberculosis and 10 of other forms, 20 altogether, which is a large number, and rather more than the average for the whole kingdom. But two or three cases arose outside the district, and the rest probably represent an accumulation of cases from previous years, and so the number of notifications may be expected to be less in future years.

The M.O.H. makes enquiries, and keeps himself informed as to circumstances of each case notified.

When a patient removes out of the district or dies, the Sanitary Inspector supplies disinfectants, offers to fumigate, and gives advice as to cleansing.

The County Council have established a tuberculous dispensary in Victoria Street, Holmfirth, with a Medical Officer and two nurses in attendance on Mondays and Thursdays. Several patients from this district have been treated there, and two have been sent away to sanatoria, where they seem to have received great benefit.

The County Council schemes are still quite undeveloped, and it would be premature to discuss them. The outlook as to treatment generally is a hopeful one, and the increased attention paid to the disease has had this effect in the West Riding, that, whereas during the last ten years the death-rate from all diseases has steadily declined, the death-rate from Phthisis has fallen at a much greater rate.

Of non-notifiable diseases, Measles and Mumps have been epidemic throughout the district.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.—The births of 93 infants were registered, 48 boys and 45 girls, making a birth-rate of 20·4 per 1,000, which is a very low rate.

The birth-rate for England and Wales for 1913 was 23·9 per 1,000 per annum. The average birth-rate for New Mill for previous five years was 22·2 per 1,000 per annum. The average birth-rate for the West Riding for previous five years was 25·8 per 1,000 per annum.

As 44 deaths were registered, there was a natural increase of 49, but all the increase and more is always lost by emigration to other towns and countries.

Deaths.—Thirty-nine deaths actually occurred in the district, but the deaths of five persons belonging to this district took place in Workhouses, Hospitals, and Asylums, making a total of 44, and a death-rate of 9·6 per 1,000, which is a very low rate indeed.

The death-rate for England and Wales for 1913 was 13·7 per 1,000 per annum. The average death-rate for New Mill for previous five years was 13·9 per 1,000 per annum. The average death-rate for West Riding for previous five years was 14·9 per 1,000 per annum. The causes of the deaths are given in Table III. As the numbers are small, I only need say that the Zymotic death-rate was ·65, as compared with 1·20 for England and Wales; Phthisis death-rate was ·87—the average for the West Riding was ·9; Respiratory death-rate was ·65—the average for the West Riding was 2·4.

The very low death-rate may be attributed to the very cold weather during the summer months, which prevented the usual fatal forms of diarrhoea, to the low birth-rate, to improved sanitation, and to increased medical attention.

But the vital statistics of a small district are calculated on numbers too small to make true averages, and we ought to be neither too much elated by a low death rate nor depressed by a high one.

One of your number remarked recently that he thought little of death-rates because if low one year they might be high the next. It is true they tend towards the average, but it is also true that a life saved one year may live through the next year, and for 10, 20, or 70 years in addition.

Infantile Mortality.—As only two infants died under the age of twelve months, the infantile mortality rate was 21 per thousand births.

The rate for England and Wales was 109 per thousand births.

The average rate for New Mill for previous five years was 121 per thousand births.

The average rate for West Riding for previous five years was 127 per thousand births.

The notification of births is not in force and there is no Health-Visitor. The County Council have adopted the Act, and they are going to arrange for the work arising from it.

Finally, the chief sanitary requirements are an increased storage of drinking water, and attention to private drainage in the outlying parts of the district.

Yours respectfully,

ALBERT THORP.

Undercliffe,

Holmfirth.

March 16th, 1914.

TABLE I.

New Mill Urban District

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1913 and previous years.

YEAR.	Popu- lation estima- ted to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.		Transferable Deaths.		Nett Deaths belonging to the District.				
		Uncorrected No	NETT.	No.	Rate.	of Non- residents registered in the District	of Resi- dents not registered in the District	Under 1 Year of Age.		Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.		
								No.	Rate.		No.	Rate
1908	4630	110	23·8	54	11·6		1	11	100·0	55	11·8	
1909	4630	99	21·6	52	11·2		2	9	90·9	54	11·6	
1910	4630	97	20·9	59	12·7		9	13	134·0	68	14·7	
1911	4568	103	22·5	69	15·0	1	10	18	174·7	78	17·0	
1912	4568	97	21·2	52	11·3		10	11	114·4	62	13·5	
1913	4560	92	20·3	39	8·5		5	2	21·5	44	9·6	

Area of District in acres (land and inland water) 6,260

Total population at all ages 4,568
 Number of inhabited houses 1,045
 Average number of persons per house.. .. . 4·37

At
Census
of 1911

TABLE II.

New Mill Urban District.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1913.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	Number of Cases notified.							Total Cases notified in each Locality of the District.			Total Cases removed to Hospital.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.									
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 45.	45 to 65	65 and upwards.	Fulstone.	Hepworth.	
Diphtheria (including Membranous Group)	10	2	6		2	1		6	1	4	5
Erysipelas	1										
Scarlet Fever	47	1	11	31	3	1		7	10	30	41
Enteric Fever	3			1	1	1		3			1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	10		1	2	4	3		1	2	7	2
Other forms of Tuberculosis	10		2	4	2	2		4	3	3	Workhouse 1
TOTALS	81	1	16	44	10	9	1	21	16	44	49

Isolation Hospital
or Hospitals,
Sanatoria, &c. }

The Colne & Holme Joint Isolation Hospitals at Meltham (outside.)
West Riding County Council Sanatoria at Balby, near Doncaster.

TABLE III.

New Mill Urban District.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the year 1913.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents," whether occurring within or without the District.									Total Deaths whether of Residents or Non- Residents in Institu- tions in the District.
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 2.	2 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 45.	45 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	
All Causes—Certified	44	2	3	2	2	3	5	14	13	
Scarlet Fever	2			1	1					
Diphtheria and Croup	1				1					
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	4		1			2		1		
Cancer, malignant disease ..	6							4	2	
Meningitis	1			1						
Organic Heart Disease.. ..	5						1	2	2	
Pneumonia (all forms)	2		1				1			
Other diseases of respiratory organs.. ..	1						1			
Diarrhœa and Enteritis ..	1								1	
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	5						1	2	2	
Congenital Debility and Mal- formation, including Pre- mature Birth	1	1								
Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide	1							1		
Other Defined Diseases.. ..	10		1			1	1	4	3	
Diseases ill-defined or unknown	4	1							3	
TOTALS .. Males .. 24 Females.. 20	44	2	3	2	2	3	5	14	13	

Sub-Entries, included in above figures—Lobar Pneumonia ... 1.

Infant Mortality.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	3 months and under 6 months.	Total Deaths. under 1 year
All causes Certified.....	1	1		2		2
Convulsions		1		1		1
Premature Birth	1			1		1
TOTALS.....	1	1		2		2

$$\text{Nett Deaths in the year} \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \text{Legitimate Infants} \dots & 2. \\ \text{Illegitimate Infants} \dots & 0. \end{array} \right.$$

